

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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AMCONSUL HONG KONG

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: EAIR, TW, JA

SUBJECT: DISPUTE OVER CHINA AIR LINES USE OF JAPANESE TERMINALS

REF: TAIPEI 3274; TAIPEI 3422

1. SUMMARY. IN LATE MAY, JCAB DIRECTOR GENERAL CONFIRMED THAT CAL WOULD REMAIN AT HANEDA WHEN OTHER INTERNATIONAL CARRIERS MOVE TO NARITA AIRPORT, AND THAT, FOR "REASONS OF MANPOWER", CUSTOMS AND IMMIGRATION (CIQ) SERVICES AT HANEDA WOULD SUBSEQUENTLY BE LIMITED EVEN IF TAIWAN OFFICIALS TAKE SOME RECIPROCAL ACTION AGAINST OPERATIONS TO TAIWAN BY JAPAN ASIA AIRLINES (JAA). DISCUSSIONS WITH TAIWAN OFFICIALS RE CAL'S FUTURE WILL BE CARRIED OUT FIRST THROUGH JAA AND LATER BY JCAB OFFICIALS DIRECTLY WITH CAL. THERE IS, HOWEVER, POSSIBILITY OF SOME FLEXIBILITY IN CIQ HOURS ALTHOUGH IT APPEARS CAL WILL ALSO HAVE TO READJUST ITS SCHEDULE. JCAB OBVIOUSLY WISHES TO KEEP ISSUE AS NON-POLITICAL AND NON-CONTROVERSIAL AS POSSIBLE. END SUMMARY.

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2. DURING MAY 30 PRESS CONFERENCE, HEAD OF JAPAN CIVIL AVIATION BUREAU (DIRECTOR-GENERAL TAKAHASHI) DEALT WITH NARITA AIRPORT'S OPENING AND SUBJECT OF CHINA AIRLINES' (CAL) OPERATIONS. DESPITE CONTINUING OPPOSITION AND CONSTRUCTION PROBLEMS, TRANSPORTATION MINISTRY STILL AIMS AT OPENING NARITA BY END 1977. TAKAHASHI CONFIRMED THAT CAL, IN ACCORDANCE WITH

JAPAN-CHINA (PRC) AVIATION AGREEMENT, WILL BE LEFT AT HANEDA WHEN ALL OTHER INTERNATIONAL CARRIERS, INCLUDING JAL'S INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AND JAA, MOVE TO NARITA. TAKAHASHI ADMITTED THAT CAL'S COMPETITORS HAD EXPRESSED OPPOSITION TO THIS POLICY WHICH WOULD, OWING TO NARITA'S DISTANCE (66 KM) FROM TOKYO, "BRING ABOUT DISADVANTAGES AS TO BUSINESS" BUT ACCORDING TO TAKAHASHI, NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE.

3. IN REGARD TO CAL'S CONTINUED HANEDA OPERATIONS, TAKAHASHI SAID THAT "THE GOVERNMENT OFFICES CONCERNED" DECIDED THAT CIQ BUSINESS (EMIGRATION, IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS CLEARANCE) "CANNOT BE CONDUCTED OUTSIDE OFFICIAL WORKING HOURS (9 TO 5) FOR REASONS OF MANPOWER". ACCORDINGLY, JCAB HAS ASKED CAL TO REORGANIZE ITS POST-NARITA OPENING SCHEDULE IN ORDER TO ARRIVE AND DEPART HANEDA ONLY DURING THESE HOURS. TAKAHASHI RECOGNIZED THAT THE "TAIWAN SIDE" MIGHT SIMILARLY RESTRICT JAA'S OPERATING HOURS BUT HE TERMED THIS POSSIBILITY "UNAVOIDABLE".

4. DURING SUBSEQUENT INFORMAL DISCUSSION, ANOTHER JCAB OFFICIAL CONFIRMED THE SUBSTANCE OF TAKAHASHI'S REMARKS AND CLARIFIED THAT "OFFICIAL WORKING HOURS" FOR FUTURE CIQ FACILITIES AT HANEDA MEANT EIGHT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HOURS A DAY OPERATION MONDAY-FRIDAY PLUS SATURDAY MORNINGS. HE INDICATED THERE IS A POSSIBILITY OF SOME "SLIGHT ADJUSTMENT" IN THE PROPOSED CIQ HOURS.

5. FOLLOWING RECEIPT REFTEL B, EMBOFF FOUND OPPORTUNITY INFORMALLY TO DISCUSS CAL'S FUTURE OPERATIONS WITH OFFICIAL OF ANOTHER CARRIER WHICH HAS EXPRESSED CONCERN TO US ABOUT COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE CAL WILL HAVE OVER THOSE CARRIERS MOVING TO NARITA. EMBOFF ASKED WHETHER CIQ OPERATING HOURS AT HANEDA COULDN'T BE "SHIFTED AROUND THE CLOCK" SO AS TO OVERLAP CAL'S PRESENT SCHEDULE. REPLY WAS THAT THIS IS UNLIKELY AS CUSTOMS OFFICIALS, ONE OF MOST MILITANT GOVERNMENT UNIONS, HAD ALREADY REJECTED SUCH A PROPOSAL.

6. COMMENT: M JCAB CLEARLY PREFERS TO HANDLE UPCOMING SEPARATION OF TWO CHINESE CARRIERS AND CAL'S CONTINUED PRESENCE AT HANEDA IN NON-POLITICAL WAY AND IS PREPARED, WITHIN BUDGETARY LIMITS, TO BE AS FLEXIBLE ON CIQ HOURS AS POSSIBLE. ALTHOUGH "RESTRICTIONS" WILL NOT BE IMPOSED ON CAL, AIRLINE

WILL OBVIOUSLY HAVE TO ARRIVE AND DEPART DURING
HOURS WHEN CIQ IS OPEN. SOME READJUSTMENT OF
CAL'S PRESENT OPERATING HOURS APPEARS NECESSARY.
FACT THAT READJUSTED ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES
EITHER HERE OR ON WEST COAST MAY MAKE CAL FLIGHTS
LESS ATTRACTIVE TO PASSENGERS COULD SERVE TO
MOLLIFY COMPETING CARRIERS' CRITICISM AND THUS BE
UNPLANNED BONUS FOR GOJ.
MANSFIELD

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